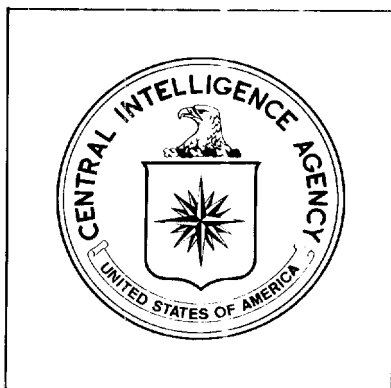


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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Saudi Arabia

New Cabinet

The cabinet reorganization in Riyadh this week did not reflect any change in the political balance within the ruling family, but did suggest the regime's concern about speeding up economic and social development. Six new ministries were created in the shake-up; many of the new ministers are not well known to the public.

King Khalid, who retained the office of prime minister, relinquished the post of foreign minister to Prince Saud, a son of King Faysal. Saud had been minister of state for foreign affairs. Crown Prince Fahd turned over the interior ministry to his full brother and former deputy, Prince Nayif, one of his strongest supporters. Defense Minister Prince Sultan retained his post.

Two other princes, half-brothers of the King and Fahd, were given cabinet posts for the first time. Prince Mitab, minister of public works and housing, has had previous, but undistinguished, government service as deputy defense minister and emir of Mecca. He has held no office since the mid-1960s; lately he has been active in business. Prince Majid, now minister of urban and rural affairs, had never held office. Both of these ministries are new and will handle large amounts of development money.

Central planning office chief Hisham Nazir, a protege of Fahd and one of the rising stars in the Saudi establishment, has been named to head a newly created planning ministry. His function will not change much, but his new post will give him more clout in setting the course of national development. In his mid-forties and a graduate of UCLA, Nazir is one of the western-educated commoners who have been moving into prominence in recent years. He is thought to be something of a rival of Petroleum Minister Yamani, also Western-educated, who retains his post in the new cabinet.

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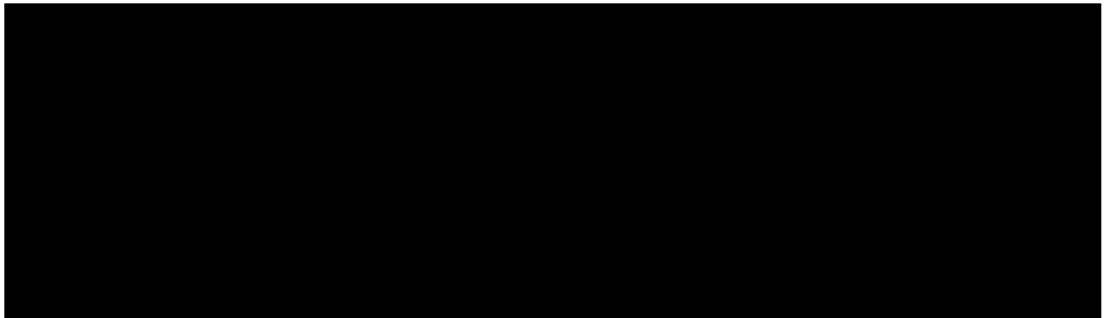
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Muhammad aba al-Khayl, who is often allied with Nazir in policy debates, has become finance minister. He was previously minister of state for finance and national economy. He replaces Prince Musaid, the king's uncle, who resigned several months ago. The finance ministry has, however, been stripped of some of its most important functions; it no longer prepares the budget, and the control of housing and public works has been transferred to a new ministry.

Other economic ministries--commerce and the new ministry of industry and electricity--have been assigned to young, energetic, well-educated, and capable commoners, Dr. Sulaiman al-Sulaim and Dr. Ghazi al-Qusaibi. Neither of them has had extensive experience in government administration, although Sulaim has recently functioned as Saudi coordinator for the US-Saudi joint economic commission.



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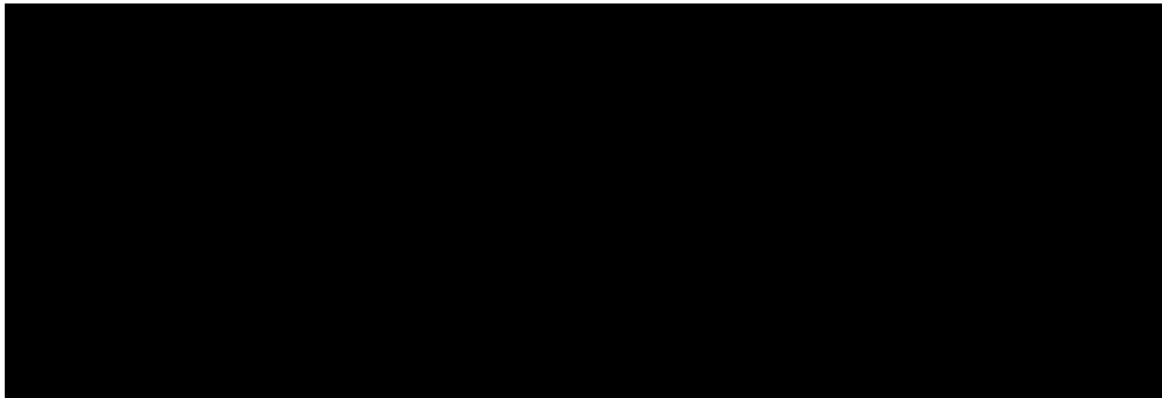
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Bangladesh

Internal Security Concerns Persist

The Dacca government apparently remains deeply concerned about internal security.



Meanwhile, the government's campaign to confiscate the large number of illegally held arms throughout Bangladesh has entered its second month. According to government reports, a large number of people and a wide variety of weapons continue to be rounded up. Last month the government reported that about 1,500 people had been arrested for illegal possession of weapons.

The government's concern over its security is likely to persist for some time. In addition to opposition from Mujib's supporters and the economic and social woes inherited from his regime, Mushtaque and his associates face other thorny problems. A post coup leadership struggle in the military, although currently quiescent, could boil over. Mushtaque probably also realizes that public disenchantment is inevitable unless his regime makes some progress in dealing with the country's problems. So far, it has taken few policy initiatives, and there is little evidence it has generated much popular support. (SECRET NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON)



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